

13 Young People and 5 Groups to Be Honored with the Governor's Youth Volunteer Service Awards at May 24 Ceremony at Polytech

NEW CASTLE (May 22, 2017) – In recognition of their outstanding service to Delaware, Governor John Carney will honor 13 young people and five groups with the Governor's Youth Volunteer Service Awards during a ceremony May 24 at the Polytech Adult Education Conference Center in Woodside.

"Across the state, I am impressed by the level of commitment our young people have to serving others," Governor Carney said. "I am proud to honor their energy, spirit and willingness as they help us to build stronger and healthier communities. Without question, they demonstrate that one person can make a difference in the lives of others."

More than 200 people are expected to join the Governor in honoring the young volunteers for their outstanding service, community impact and inspiration to others. The event will begin with a reception at 5 p.m., followed by dinner at 6 p.m. and the ceremony starting at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$25 per person and are available online.

"In a world in which technology can sometimes make us feel disconnected, these young people embrace the importance of human connection," said Dr. Kara Odom Walker, Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services, which oversees the State Office of Volunteerism. "They understand the value of helping others, because they know it brings us closer together and enhances our collective sense of community. I join the

Governor in thanking them for making volunteerism and helping others a priority in their communities.”

The 2017 award recipients participated in such diverse activities as assisting people with disabilities, educating peers, leading nature programs, supporting a fire company, coordinating blood drives and organizing fundraisers. They are representative of Delaware’s young people who are making a positive contribution to society, and inspiring others to do the same

“The recipients of Governor’s Youth Volunteer Service Awards serve as role models by serving others and inspiring their peers to do something meaningful with their time,” said Georgeanna Windley, Chair of the Governor’s Commission on Community and Volunteer Service.

The Governor’s Youth Volunteer Service Awards are sponsored by the Office of the Governor and are coordinated by the State Office of Volunteerism and the Governor’s Commission on Community and Volunteer Service.

2017 Governor’s Youth Volunteer Service Award Winners

Individuals

Wei-Ling Moloy

Arts & Culture

Nominator: Angela Williamson

Wei-Ling Moloy is an active volunteer at Hagley Museum & Library, serving as a youth leader in its Youth Leadership Program (YLP) and as a camp counselor. As a youth leader, Wei-Ling facilitates and designs programs and activities related to Hagley’s stories of technology, science, and innovation. As a camp counselor, she supported the adult camp instructors by interacting with campers, assisting with activities, and maintaining the enjoyment and safety of campers. Beginning in 2014, as a shy, quiet volunteer, Wei-Ling has grown into a

strong leader who is respected both by her fellow youth leaders and the adult mentors in the Hagley Museum & Library volunteer program.

Suprit Bodla

Community Service

Nominator: Jim Power

Since 2013, Suprit Bodla has volunteered with the Boy Scouts of America, Christiana Care Health System and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS). He has organized a variety of fundraisers to benefit LLS and also to raise public awareness of the fight against blood cancer. Suprit is also a student mentor for the Science Ambassadors Program at the Charter School of Wilmington, where he, along with his peers, helped to organize a STEM tutoring program at Marbrook Elementary School and work with the Delaware Children's Museum to provide science and math activities for Engineering Week.

Nadeem D. Boggerty

Community Service

Nominators: Adrienne Gomez

Dover High School honor student Nadeem D. Boggerty has been volunteering in his community for the past six years with his church, his school and through social organizations. One of the many organizations at which Nadeem volunteers is the Calvary Church in Dover, where he and his family help pack boxes and assist with dinner on Thanksgiving each year. Nadeem also participates in several social service organizations (the Omega Gents, a program steered by Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.; EMBODI, hosted by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.; and BeB.O.L.D., a nonprofit youth mentoring organization in Dover) where he has helped feed the homeless, staff information tables at Back-to-School Fairs, toy drives, First State Community Day, and other activities that support the local community.

Sarah Davis

Education

Nominator: Michelle Neef

Fourteen-year-old Sarah Davis has been volunteering with Faithful Friends Animal Society for four years. Sarah passionately promotes, educates and supports her community and has become a true leader and advocate for her generation. Furthermore, she displays great compassion while taking the initiative to ensure the safety of animals. Her tenacity has saved the lives of many dogs and cats, and improved the lives of neighbors who care for them. Sarah has provided long-term foster care to neonate kittens and delivered food from Faithful Friends Animal Society Pet Food Bank to pet owners with low incomes or those struggling in other ways to assist them in keeping their family pets in their home. She also rescued dogs and cats from perilous environments and has been instrumental for the Trap-Neuter-Return program, which works to reduce and improve the community cat population.

Cheyenne McGowan

Environment

Nominator: Emily Krueger

Cheyenne McGowan started with the Brandywine Zoo as a summer teen intern with its Zoo Camps during the summer of 2016. After the summer, she continued her volunteer efforts by signing up to help with various educational events at the zoo, including International Red Panda Day, Vulture Weekend, and Noon Year's Eve. Her role for these events was educating the public at learning stations using animal artifacts, activities, or crafts. In addition, Cheyenne frequently came in to interpret the zoo's animal exhibits to the public as a docent. Since she started volunteering a year ago, Cheyenne has helped educate hundreds of people at the zoo, which serves the greater Wilmington area, on different environmental topics, including climate change, animal adaptations, and specific animal facts.

Michael Robinette
Health & Special Needs
Nominator: Margaret Jenkins

Since 2013, Michael Robinette has volunteered with the Mary Campbell Center's Children & Youth program. Mike works with more than 100 children each summer, in a variety of age groups with unique physical or intellectual disabilities. His responsibilities include assisting children in different activities throughout the day such as arts and crafts, games, swimming and cooking. Mike also supports staff with talent show planning and production. Additionally, he provides supervision and companionship for campers on field trips during the summer camp program. Mike gets to know the campers on a one-on-one level and is quick to learn their likes and dislikes, and when they need or want help.

Santiago Vizcaino
Health & Special Needs
Nominator: Richard Huber

Santiago Vizcaino began volunteering with the Delaware Division for the Visually Impaired in the summer of 2016. During his time with the agency, Santiago has provided assistance in producing resource material for students with visual impairments, assisting staff with departmental projects and developing training procedures for the organization. Beginning at the Instruction Resource Material Center, Santiago produced large-print reading material for students, which were provided to 247 students. He developed a process that allowed books to be converted to PDF format, which allows a student with a visual impairment to use an iPad or other electronic device to review the document via voice narration or zoom text option, depending on the individual student's needs. In addition, Santiago helped to develop training procedures for other volunteers.

Joy Baker

Human Needs

Nominator: Joyce Sessoms

In 2016 alone, Joy Baker volunteered an estimated 200+ hours in a variety of capacities in the Delmar and Laurel communities. She serves on the Youth Board of Directors of The ARK Education Resource Center, volunteers at her church as an assistant to the program coordinator responsible for youth activities, and is a member of the National Honor Society. For ARK, Joy acts as a recruiter and fundraiser, and is also an active participant in ARK-sponsored events like the Back-to-School Extravaganza held in Janosik Park.

Katelyn Craft

Human Needs

Nominator: Emily Holcombe

In July 2016, Katelyn Craft began volunteering at Exceptional Care for Children (ECC), Delaware's first and only nonprofit pediatric skilled nursing facility for children who are medically fragile. Through the Resident Playdate volunteer program, ECC is able to provide the residents the chance to interact with individuals who can offer something other than medical care. At age 14, Katy knew she wanted to bring smiles and joy to children who have extensive medical needs. She has spent more than 100 hours reading, playing games, watching movies, assisting with arts and crafts projects, or just spending quality time with children who have little family involvement. In addition, Katy volunteered her time assisting with special events and fundraisers, like the Gala Fundraiser and Visits with Santa.

Daevean DeShields

Human Needs

Nominator: Aaron Tyson

Following the inspiration of his grandfather, Daevean DeShields created Project H00P, which stands for Helping Out

Other People. The goal of Project H00P was to fill 1,000 bags with supplies to be distributed to people who are homeless through Faith United Methodist Church's Open Hands Sound & Clothing Ministry. After recruiting from his local and school community (including his school principal), Daevean was able to meet and surpass his goal with a remarkable 1,015 bags assembled.

Jakob Ryan Thomas

Public Safety

Nominator: Shirin Skovronski

For almost two years, Jakob Ryan Thomas has volunteered as a junior firefighter with the Mill Creek Fire Company. In 2016 alone, he responded to 488 calls of emergency responses to structure fires, motor vehicle crashes, medical assistance, and other miscellaneous calls, amassing more than 500 volunteer hours. Jakob's actions assisted the community in multiple emergencies, which were often quite serious and dangerous in nature.

Richard Thomas

Public Safety

Nominator: Robert Bassett, Jr.

Richard Thomas has been a volunteer firefighter with Camden-Wyoming Fire Company for two years, assisting in more than 300 emergency situations such as car accidents and house fires. Richard also assists with teaching fire prevention to children. Despite his youth, Richard is well-respected at the fire company and is seen as a mentor for new firefighters.

Ananya Singh

Social Justice/Advocacy

Nominator: Meghan Pasricha

For the past nine years, Ananya Singh has been a member of the Global Youth H.E.L.P. Inc. (GYH), a Delaware nonprofit whose mission is to train and support young people to become leaders

by serving their communities through community service projects. Ananya served first as president of the middle school chapter and is currently chair of the high school chapter. Her time and efforts have been vital for many different community service projects, including the Annual Backpack Donation for the YWCA Home-Life Center, the Christmas Hygiene Product Donation, the Annual Ice Cream Party for the YWCA Home-Life Center and the Premier Charities Feeding the Homeless. She also has taught English and karate to younger children.

Groups

Greater Milford Boys & Girls Club

Arts & Culture

Nominator: Kenny Monroe

Following the devastation of Hurricane Matthew (Sept. 28-Oct. 10, 2016) in the Caribbean, the Teen TITAN program members of the Greater Milford Boys & Girls Club developed the "Hope for Haiti Donation Drive." In a relatively short time, the Team Titan program members spent 400 hours collecting clothing, toiletries, bottled water, educational material and other items. More than 300 items filled more than 10 boxes and were sent to the people in Haiti to be used as they began to rebuild and recover from the effects of Hurricane Matthew.

Cape Henlopen High School Army Junior Reserve Officers Training Program

Community Service

Nominator: Angela Thompson

For 10 continuous years, the participants of the Army Junior Reserve Officers Training Program (JROTC) at Cape Henlopen High School have learned that everyone belongs to a community and therefore has a responsibility to that community. The 45 young men and women who comprise the current JROTC roster continue that legacy of service by devoting an average of

2,000 man-hours to community service activities benefiting a number of organizations, including the Delaware Seashore State Park, Beebe Medical Center, American Red Cross Blood Drive, the Salvation Army, Brandywine Senior Citizens Center and the National Kidney Foundation.

A.I. du Pont Middle School – Walk in the Kings Footsteps
Education

Nominator: Michele Fidance

When posed with the question “What will I do to walk in the footsteps of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.?” the student body of A.I. du Pont Middle School in Wilmington decided to answer the question literally. A small group of students, led by Jobs for Delaware Graduates (JDG) instructors, were given the project of researching the speeches of Dr. King in order to choose quotes that meant something to them. The students then inscribed their selected quote on a cut-out of a footprint, which was then affixed to the wall in the cafeteria as a means to inspire their fellow students. Once students beyond the JDG classes saw the footprints, they wanted to participate as well. The project helped to raise awareness among students of Dr. King’s life, teaching and legacy, and how it translates into community action and service.

P.S. duPont Middle School Student Council – Adopt a Family
Health and Special Needs

Nominator: Mallory Stratton

Each year, the student council of P.S. duPont Middle School in Wilmington spearheads its annual Adopt-A-Family Drive. The drive involves the school community at-large adopting the families of 15 to 20 P.S. duPont students who are need assistance to make the holiday season a little brighter. The donations of clothing, books and toys generated by the student council benefited upwards of 50 fellow students and their siblings in 2016.

Delmar High School – Wildcat Wellness Pantry

Human Needs

Nominator: Michele Fidance

The Wildcat Wellness Pantry is a food pantry at the Delmar American Legion, which provides nonperishable food and household items for individuals in need. The pantry is staffed by as many as eight Jobs for Delaware Graduate (JDG) volunteers. The JDG volunteers come in on Saturdays to assist families in need and taking inventory to ensure the pantry can reach even more people. An additional group of more than 60 volunteers collect the proceeds from canned food drives that occur during the school year to continually stock the pantry.

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The Department of Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of life of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations.